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Editor

JAMES LUTHER ADAMS

Associate Editors

R. LESTER MONDALE

HUGH STEVENSON TIGNER

Business Manager

EDWARD W. OHRENSTEIN

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Our Contributors

HAROLD BUSCHMAN is professor of philosophy at the University of Kansas City.

ROWLAND GRAY-SMITH is the minister of the First Congregational Parish (Unitarian) in Sharon, Mass., and is also professor of philosophy at Emerson College, Boston. He is the author of *God in the Philosophy of Schelling*.

STEPHEN H. FRITCHMAN is Executive Director of the Unitarian Youth Commission.

R. LESTER MONDALE is the minister of All Souls' Unitarian Church in Kansas City, Missouri, and is also Associate Editor of THE JOURNAL OF LIBERAL RELIGION.

CURTIS W. REESE is Dean of Abraham Lincoln Centre in Chicago. He is the author of *Humanism* and the editor of *Humanist Sermons*.

SIDNEY S. ROBINS is professor of philosophy at St. Lawrence University.

High Religion and Economic Folk Religion

R. LESTER MONDALE

American Protestantism, according to our denominational brothers on the Continent, is "Rotary Club Religion," "fair weather religion," "shallow," under the error of "activism," utterly oblivious of life's Dostoyevskian, Kierkegaardian tragic profundity, and hence, hardly likely either to sustain men in crisis situations or to effectuate its much-vaunted earthly Kingdom of Heaven. From the French super-Catholic, Jacques Maritain, we hear that Protestantism, having rebelled "against all religion and spiritual continuity" and having travelled the road of intellectual "indocility" to the bitter end of agnosticism, naturalism and individualism, is experienced today, both socially and individually, as a disintegrative factor. The "influence of Catholicism," as the English Roman Catholic, Christopher Dawson, boasts, "is most marked . . . among the intellectuals and the men of letters." Although Maritain would have his readers believe that his Catholicism is the one hope for our decaying civilization, his hope if realized, he admits, would have to be of the nature of a patient's deathbed repentance for his deeply ingrained Cartesian, humanistic sinfulness—which is hardly likely. In a mood not entirely dissimilar to that of the ancient Numidian Bishop of Hippo, he envisages Christianity surviving the "liquidation" of humanism, Protestantism, Protestant capitalism, and the like by means of *foyers* or cells, composed of that infinitesimal fraction of Catholics who share his point of view, which will become the nuclei of the age to come. Thus we find, on Maritain's own confession, scant hope in Catholicism for the realization of Utopian expectations, or for the mitigation of contemporary ills, or for the averting of impending catastrophe. In Continental Protestantism, now under the spell of the violently other-worldly Karl Barth, we find even scantier hopes.

If we make a distinction, however, between what one might call *economic folk religion* and *high religion*, the so-called failure of religion is seen not as failure, but rather as the transition from one economic folk religion to another. At this juncture it would be comforting to deduce from this distinction the pleasant conclusion

that while economic folk religions come and go high religion can go on forever preaching a *nice* revolution. The import of the facts however is otherwise. The relation of economic folk religion to high religion is organic; high religion cannot function without the folk religion, crass at times as it may appear; and high religion, again, changes with the folk religion, takes on its coloration to such an extent at times as to be hardly distinguishable as a legitimate offspring of the great, rich high religion tradition.

An economic folk religion is associated with those bread-and-butter-winning routines that invariably consume the lion's share of the time and the energy of any people, and are indispensable not only for sustaining the life of the group, but for the integration of the personalities of the members of the group. Work alone is not enough, of course, to integrate the numerous aspects of personality into a complete whole; but without work there can be no stable integration. The economic routines then do not merely sustain body directly and soul indirectly; they directly sustain both body *and* soul. Economic folk religion is, generally speaking, the sum total of mental, volitional, emotional attitudes together with the associated myths that give the time-engrossing routines a meaning other than that of merely sustaining physical existence, and together with the associated legends of heroism that give the routines a touch of zest and romance.

Illustrative of the inner nature of the economic folk religion was the plight of the Melanesians, as described by Christian Gauss in his *Primer For Tomorrow*, after their British overlords had proscribed head-hunting. Previous to the prohibition the native calendar was punctuated by the feasts, the boat building, the initiation of youth preparatory to the annual marauding expeditions to secure the heads which were essential, they believed, to the growth of their crops. Reduced to living for bread alone they literally lost their will to live; and dismal indeed became the picture of race suicide they presented. Other tribes, however, which embraced Christianity (more will be said presently about the elements of *economic* folk religion in Christianity) or which clung to head-hunting, persisted in pristine vigor.

In a more sophisticated society the economic folk religion, invariably unnoticed except in so far as its values are scathed by high religion's priests and prophets, forms a lower and foundational

layer of the total religious structure. And here disillusionment with the folklore of the economic life and the consequent reduction of daily work to the level of merely sustaining physical existence results in the individual's sinking to living for the immediate gratification of his instinctive cravings—after the fashion of the squatter's sons in Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*, the prototype of the hill billy, or after the fashion of most of the brothers and sisters of Theodore Dreiser, described in *Dawn*, the prototype of the slum dweller.

In Cooper and Dreiser one can make out a prophetic discernment of the beginnings of the end of the great American *laissez-faire* folk religion. The actual end did not come, of course, until that period, marked by the close of the World War and the Presidential election of 1936, during which the American people as a whole became aware of the fate H. G. Wells had prophesied for us in 1911 when he envisaged property become "organized, consolidated, concentrated, and secured." And today so complete is the collapse of the *laissez-faire* type of folk religion that it is next to impossible for the average person to recapture the *feel* of its former power and value. "In America industry was not merely bread and butter," wrote Lewis Mumford in his *Golden Day*, "it was love, adventure, worship, art, and every sort of ideality; and to withdraw from industry was to become incapacitated for any further life."

Today, what with the almost universal disillusionment with the mythology of the economic faith of our fathers, and what with the "muckrakers'" debunking of its legend of heroism, we find the ominous problem of work staring us in the face—not work for the unemployed, but the problem of giving work a greater-than-bread-alone significance. Without this larger significance men find themselves, employed or unemployed, in the position of the *economic man*, described by Peter Drucker in a recent essay, "looking down an interminable dark stretch of nothing." The bitter poignancy of the problem of work does not make itself felt, however, until one attempts deliberately to superimpose a significance upon it. One, for instance, is tempted to meet the difficulty before us with the remedial idea that work's significance may be found in making work a means to the end of engaging in cultural activities—music, painting, reading, etc. Here the prevailing conception of culture as

"jam on the plain bread of life" reduces culture to the hobby status, to dilettantism, with the result that work, directed thus to an end not generally recognized as worthy of its inherent value and strain, loses the compulsion that gives it integrative value. Play, taken as an end for work, loses its integrative efficacy in face of the fact that over a period of time working for play will cause work to lose the high seriousness that gives it integrative value. Neither can work be justified by its therapeutic value alone. Work when it has therapeutic value gets it for the most part from the larger and antecedent social significance of work—hence the consequent readjustment of the personality through socially valuable enterprise to the life of the group. Admitted then that culture, as it is commonly understood, play, and therapeutics are unable to give work adequate significance, are we not justified in going on to assume first that the significance in question must be organic to work itself—not superimposed upon it—and secondly that this significance must be of the nature of socially valuable, socially sanctioned and motivated enterprise that captures the romantic imagination of the overwhelming majority of the group?

Since it would be profitless trying in the parlour to manufacture significance to superimpose upon work, we have no choice now but to turn to the consideration of movements that are attempting to meet the need.

Most prominent among these movements in America today is the resurgence from the social-subsoil of old-fashioned evangelical Protestantism, and the attendant revival of the economic folk religion aspects of Christianity which make a virtue of the immediate necessity of poverty. In this ideological framework, work takes on heavenly significance in inverse ratio to the starkness of its drudgery and the dearth of its social meaning. In the higher all-knowing retributive Justice it has a significance which one glorious day will be made manifest. This American evangelical resurgence bears marked resemblances to a similar trend in Germany, particularly in Saxony, in 1930, which in the face of the overwhelming Nazi confidence in achieving alleviation, and in the face of the new significance Nazism gave daily work, reached its zenith in 1932 and quickly subsided.

The outstanding items of the Nazi folk religion, particularly as presented by Alfred Rosenberg in his *Myth of the Twentieth Cen-*

ture, are so familiar to all informed persons by this time that their mention calls for no elaboration: The divine *Urville* expressing itself, coming to consciousness, in the German *Volk*; the *Volk* as the fountain of creativity; the significance of the common man to the *Volk*; the glorious military and cultural future ahead of the *Volk*. Suffice it to say that every item of work, whether in the German kitchen or in the classroom, at the machine-shop lathe or at the proof-reader's desk, is now experienced by no small majority of Germans as a felt relationship to the larger highly venerated social whole.

This new economic folk religion is regarded with hatred by German liberals and the upper *bourgeoisie* who as classes are doomed to relinquish their recently acquired sense of destiny, to the lower middle classes and to submit to the inevitable collectivising which seems everywhere to accompany their rise. Deprived of their sense of manifest destiny these groups are in a position similar to that of the man confronted with the facts of personal failure—something which the individual seldom admits to himself, and a class never. Like the individual they meet the situation with labyrinthine rationalizations which when they are found in the field of religion tend to dissolve familiar reality into its ever-present background of mystery to the point where a world more congenial to the individual's wishes becomes progressively less fantastic, to the degree of becoming reality itself. Thrashing about, the doomed and sinking classes seize upon what seems to them to be the ludicrous naiveté and superficiality of the ideology of the rising classes, comforting themselves as they expose the naiveté and superficiality with the hope that they have thus deprived their enemy of his power. In the end, however, they find that they have been shooting merely at a Peer Gynt troll. Naiveté of ideology is more likely than not to be an indication of health, power and vigor than of weakness.

Turning from the foregoing glance at the class implications of economic folk religion, and noting in passing that the German folk religion is markedly similar to that found in Russia today, we find the question arising in our minds, Does not an economic folk religion tend to become all in all? And hence, is not its appearance of as much potential evil as its collapse? Why must the revolution go so far?

But how can it avoid going that far? Consider the facts: The economic folk religion, in giving work a more than bread-and-butter significance gives it new dignity, new compulsion, and new value. The immediate result in those who are converted to the new mythology and who enjoy a pleasurable emotional response to the new legends of heroism is a reintegration of personality—the integration that invariably accompanies a more successful social adjustment. With work now become a highly serious business play becomes a relaxation from seriousness and therefore becomes more truly play than heretofore. Moreover, that abandonment of self, commonly known and enjoyed as courage, more frequently puts in its thrilling appearance in various out of the way nooks and corners of the daily round. With more complete integration of the personality, with play, with courage comes not only a new “feel”—a more primitive feel perhaps, but sincere—for beauty and the aesthetic generally, but also the spirit’s awakening to its need for means of objectifying its new-found emotions and inner harmonies. All this calls for extra energy. Furthermore, in hours of stress and strain men come to the end of their powers, to the place where the personality begins to break under the sheer weight of living. Then, seeking life, and life more abundantly, individuals must inevitably gravitate in the direction of those attitudes—cosmic, social, personal—that are found, for instance, in the Sermon on the Mount and that not only give to personality its superstructure of integration but also release energy. Thus from the urgent need developed out of itself the economic folk religion impels men to seek what might be termed high religion, to accept the attitudes that in turn act as a counterbalancing force on the tendencies toward excess.

The natural impulse of the American Protestant, reviewing the present relationship of German folk religion to German high religion, is to sympathize violently with the Confessional group, and to excoriate those who have “capitulated” to Nazism, the German Christian churches. Looking at this situation in such light as may have come from the foregoing paragraphs we see in this so-called capitulation what always takes place in the relation of high religion to the folk religion in transition. The German Christian churches have their counterpart, at least to many discerning European eyes, in American Protestantism. To the Continental European, nur-

tured in a Christianity which, unbeknown to him, is in itself a capitulation to the agricultural folk religion of feudalism, transatlantic Protestantism is not only shallow and naive in thought, but a capitulation to the myths and ways of *laissez-faire*. And admittedly, American Protestantism, in adjusting itself to the all-pervasive atmosphere of the *laissez-faire* folk religion, did accept the "gospel of work" and the "belief in progress," preached individualism, and lent itself to contributing to the success idyl and the maintenance of business morale. Even its reformism, far from being anti-capitalistic, has been, until the last decade at least, primarily directed toward bringing into realization the heavenly promises of the prophets of Manchester.

European religion is trying to make that most difficult leap from feudalism, over the folk religion of the *bourgeoisie*, to that of an economic collectivism. Russian Orthodoxy was evidently too decrepit to make it. Whether or not Continental Protestantism and Catholicism will succeed is highly conjectural. But that American Protestantism, and American religious liberalism in particular, having capitulated to bourgeois ideology—and capitulated perhaps to an extent far greater than we have the perspective to recognize—has better chances will appear now as we try to introduce, in conclusion, the various forward-looking inferences that seem to inhere in the position here outlined.

American Protestantism, although it has taken on the coloration of the basic folk religion to an extent that Europeans recognize it only with difficulty as the offspring of the genteel tradition, has not failed. This is true, because in the first place it is not, by and large, within the capabilities of high religion either to save a folk religion once a change of social conditions has decreed its doom or to superimpose upon work the mythology and legends, the significance, in other words, that raise it to the folk religion status. Moreover, it has succeeded admirably in adjusting itself to the indigenous folk religion, while at the same time it has a record, of which both European Protestantism and European Catholicism might well be envious, of throwing the weight of the genteel tradition against the excesses of *laissez-faire* which has threatened at times to prove a veritable Babbington's Curse on American soil. At the moment American Protestantism has a vague and uneasy feeling that it is incumbent upon itself to *save society*. However, it is necessary in

this connection to recall that, as far as high religion is concerned, economic folk religions rise and fall of their own accord, that they must grow organically out of the total social-economic situation and that they are not—superficial appearances in Germany and Russia to the contrary—to be superimposed upon a people from above. One hears fervent pleas from leaders of fine humanitarian feeling for the application of the ethics of Jesus to the economic situation. Humanitarianism, however, although needful, can hardly *save society*, when the real need of our people is not so much for the relief of hunger as for something to be hungry for. The revival of the economic folk religion aspects of Christianity cannot, in the light of recent events in Germany and Russia, be the solution. An out and out commitment of the churches to the advancement of the revolutionary proletariat is a doubtful solution, what with the tendencies toward conservatism evident among the proletariat once it has achieved the organization of strong unions, and what with the proletarian revolution thrown very much into reverse by the Comintern.

Granted then that Protestantism, in so far as it is representative of high religion, is in no position to write the scriptures or compose the legends or shape the worship of the new folk religion, the fact remains that our free churches cannot remain unconcerned; and it is largely in this matter of concern that the success or the failure of the institutions which today act as channels for high religion lies. American Protestantism, if it is to remain a channel for the high religion tradition, has before it the problem of making the major adjustment of its history. In other words, since institutions of high religion cannot function properly apart from *their* folk religion base—since, that is, they can hardly expect to integrate men on the higher levels of the spirit when all is chaos on the lower instinctive and daily work levels—Protestantism must discover existing elements of the new folk religion and further their growth. The first condition of survival is a vivid consciousness of an impending new order of things, and an alertness to the present and the future and the practical which, if we should believe our foreign critics, we seem to rate excessively high. The prosaic and platitudinous sound of this call to a consciousness of an impending new order disappears the moment one begins to realize that the new order will not be characterized so much by newness of politi-

cal institutions, or of economic reforms, or of vast public works projects, but characterized by that something far more subtle which the following sentences will attempt to describe. Actually the new folk religion, prompted by the expectations of a new order, will become, in the main, the new order. The new order, in other words, will be a movement like the *laissez-faire* movement captained in this country by Thomas Paine and Alexander Hamilton, the Nazi movement, or the Lenin-Trotsky-Stalin movement—which gives to the work of the daily round the dignity of contributing to the building of that Utopian order which is forever being realized and yet (although not apparent to the new converts), with each revolutionary step taken, is always apparently just one step ahead. The new order will be the new folk religion; from it will come new men who will open their eyes to a world presenting itself under the strange conversion-aspects of newness. Today then, the relation of the revolution-conscious Protestant to the present as well as to the future can be only that of a John the Baptist. The new order towards which he looks resolves itself, on sober analysis, into one that is more of spirit than of matter; it will be the coming of a folk movement, shaped by the needs and the aspirations of the American people, with myths and legends which have the quality described in aesthetics as *probability*.

We live in an interim period, a period during which the average personality is condemned, because of the absence of a folk religion which gives significance to his daily work, to one of the levels of purgatory. If Protestantism fails, it will not be in a failure to *save society*, or in humanitarian acts of alleviation, or in defense of civil liberties, but in failing to arouse in the professional and the skilled proletarian the sense of destiny that is his, in failing to recognize that the integration of personality is a radically different thing for the professionally-minded from what it is for properly-minded, in failing to arouse the feeling of comfort in the promises of the coming collectivist society, in failing to discern the fact that collectivism means not only the democratizing of the now plutocratically controlled economic system, but also the democratizing of culture together with this demonic thing called *taste*, in failing to note and act on the fact that the theological outlook of the rising folk religions of today is not obscured by dialectical profundities but is of a distinctly liberal theistic and humanistic cast. All these ele-

ments are unquestionably entering into the shaping of the new folk religion.

A sort of Kingdom of Heaven is imminent and if, during this interim period, religion can help people to enter this Kingdom of Heaven, even in part, even so much as John-the-Baptist-like maintaining the hope not only of better *things* to come, but also of the sense of being needed to help with tremendously important *work* to come, then this effort will serve partially the purpose of folk religion.

High religion's major task resolves itself then into the job of helping the personality in transition to maintain itself whole—orthodox Christianity by means of the economic folk religion aspects of its faith, liberal Christianity and Humanism by acting along the lines just suggested. The opposite was expressed in its terrifying truth by Trotsky: "Revolution destroys men." Today countless numbers are literally in the process of being destroyed. One type of religion, in confirming the property-minded in their antequated folk ideologies and in securing them status in the divine order of things, may make their destruction less painful, but it will make the destruction that much more inevitable. But religion, if it is determined not to fail, will also be able literally to save countless souls, and it is this sort of religion that will surely be in a position best to make the adjustment when it becomes necessary and to remain a channel for truly high religion as soon as the need for it is felt . . . which will not be long thereafter.

Religious Fact and Scientific Value

ROWLAND GRAY-SMITH

If an excuse is needed for writing today on the relation between science and religion, it is found in the popularity of an opinion which seems to be erroneous. On every hand science is being associated with "fact" and religion with "value," the "quantitativeness" of science is being set over against the "qualitativeness" of religion.

This pigeonholing of interests is frequently accompanied by an illustration. Take, for example, a rainbow. Cannot this single object be viewed from three entirely different angles, the scientific, the esthetic, and the religious? When viewed scientifically, it is a physical phenomenon, an arc of light waves, from the rapid red to the slow violet, explainable in terms of length and energy. When viewed esthetically, it is a display of natural beauty; as the Greek poet knew, the rainbow is Iris, the daughter of Thaumas, the god of wonder, a bow of fairylike colors painted on the vanishing mist by a sunbeam's dainty brush dipped in dyes of heaven. When viewed religiously, the rainbow is an arch through which you pass to God; as Wordsworth beholds it, then a boy, now a man, the leaping of his heart binds day to day and year to year with "natural piety."

This dichotomy, in accordance with which the same phenomenon is now factual, now valuable, to the one man factual, to another man, or to the same man at another time, a thing of value, needs to be critically examined. This may disturb the comfort of those who, after having been distressed by divergences between science and religion, now, so far from finding them in conflict, refer them to separate provinces whose perpetual friendship is assured because of their interest in entirely different "aspects of reality." This truce between science and religion is on the principle of self-determination—to the one the province of fact, to the other the province of value. How strange that any should ever have thought of the possibility of conflict between them! One even detects on the part of the preacher a feeling of superiority over the scientist because his own business is with something "higher" than the merely factual.

We fear that a truce based on that dichotomy will prove to be a fool's paradise. For we are impatient to inquire, Does not the value of a value depend upon its factuality, and is not a fact known to be a fact only by its value? Take any instance of a value, and if that value is not also a fact, then it is not even a value, it is a mere illusion. Let us illustrate by the rainbow again. The Lord said, "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a token of a covenant between me and the earth." Does this statement assert a fact or a value? To an earlier generation it described a special act of creation; the rainbow was a visible sign of spiritual grace, a signature guaranteeing a covenant between God and man, a bow without arrow or string, the seal of One who was sworn to friendly peace with man. But after Newton has permitted a ray of light entering a darkened room to pass through a two-inch block of triangular glass and fall upon a screen, the giver of the rainbow is but a common ray of light, and its appearance is at the beck and call of man. What happens to the value of a document when it is proved that the signature is anyone's or no one's? Since the old story of One who set his bow in the cloud for a specific purpose has now been proved to be only a pretty fancy, what remains of the value it guaranteed? Is there still a covenant between man and God, or has the appearance of a friendly providence been turned into a mirage? Since this question strikes at the very heart of all religious faith, is it not becoming clear that the province of religion cannot ignore a scientific account of fact, and that a religious belief is valuable only in so far as it is permanently factual?

This interdependence between fact and value suggests that the popular separation of the interests of science and of religion into fact on the one hand and value on the other is based upon a misreading of the basis of both science and religion. Our thesis will be that both have an interest in both and that ultimately fact and value are identical. With this in mind we shall make a brief reference to the factual basis of religion and then attempt to show that science has its basis not in quantitative measurement but in qualitative value. The conclusion will reintegrate religion and science into an intellectual unity in which fact and value are interchangeable terms.

I

The factual aspect of religion is all too obvious to dwell upon. Religions have their histories. Their founders had a local habitation and a name. Their adherents throughout the generations constitute a quantity. That Americans today subscribe as much money to their churches as the public authorities spend on compulsory education is an easily verifiable fact. But when all such facts are in, it will be said that we have missed the essence of the matter. This essence of religion is taken to be the purely qualitative conception of a more than human power, or, as we have put it, of a friendly God in covenant with man. This essence of the matter would seem to be a pure value without any contamination of physical fact. But is it not merely a matter of idiom whether we say that at the basis of all the historical, statistical and measurable data of religion there is a supreme Value, or whether we say that that basis is a supreme Fact? If there is no way in which it is perfectly proper to speak of God as a fact, how, as we have already said, can He be a value? It would seem that the question of the factual basis of religion must turn upon what is, after all, meant by fact.

In the cheap peace that has been declared between science and religion, the realm of fact has been relegated to science. It is now our task to show that the primary interest of science might just as accurately be said to be in values. Those whose vocabulary is rich in reference to values are accustomed to speak of the classical three, of truth, of beauty and of goodness. Would we be altogether mistaken if we were to say that it is just these which are the values lying at the basis of science?

II

Taking the last-named first, How foreign is science to goodness? "The questions of what men should do," John Dewey told an interviewer on his eightieth birthday, "how they should act, do not enter into science." Against a notion so ingrained it is perhaps fruitless to repeat the Biblical proverb: "A man of knowledge increaseth strength." For while it is true, as Francis Bacon put it, that "knowledge is power," it is the use of power with which science is said to be unconcerned. Today in England scientists are being marshaled to aid their country's prosecution of war. Some

day scientific power, in its disregard of contradictions in its application, may bring to our homes the television of our sons being done to death by mechanized might. Scientists, however, as much as the rest of us, are far from being undisturbed at such contradictions. "Concern for man himself and his fate," says Einstein, "must always form the chief interest of all technical endeavors."

It may be said, however, that our thesis compels us to disregard the application of science and to refer only to pure science. Is science as science indifferent to ethics? Of course, the pure scientist is not a teacher of public morals, and at first glance he appears to be a pure individualist. On closer scrutiny, however, his realm proves to be a pattern of moral excellence. According to the ways of his society, nothing is for one's own private good. Within the laboratories of science, "every ambition as it is fulfilled lays its triumph at another's feet." This ethic is of the essence of pure science. Only through mutual dependence and unselfish sharing can our men of science continue to wrest from nature its secrets. With disinterested devotion they bind themselves to the pursuit of the common goal. If human progress is "the measure of man's cooperation with man in the conquest of nature," none are less indifferent to human progress than the workers in our laboratories. It would be altogether wrong to say that how scientists act as scientists does not enter into science. "The authority of science," John Dewey has also said, "issues from and is based upon collective activity, cooperatively organized."

III

If that attempt to find moral idealism at the basis of science should seem a little strained, the tension is relieved when we come to speak of the artist lurking in the scientist, of science's esthetic essence. Who in our day if not the scientist has taught us the excitement of the commonplace and made every bush aflame with wonder? If, as Newton taught us, there is a rainbow in every ray of light and a prism is the demiurge who makes the spectrum, on what impulse does his work proceed? The phenomenon produced in Newton's darkened room was taken as an example of a law whose other example appears in the heavens on a day of rain. The scientific assumption underlying this is that nature is orderly. The cause of the spectrum here is the cause of the rainbow there.

This assumption is the direct expression of the scientist's esthetic nature. This belief in nature's uniformity and law-abidingness is in no way less intense because it is a belief in something entirely qualitative. It is the response of science to the one in all, to the inner unity pervading all things. It must be called esthetic if the esthetic is to be distinguished from the religious and the ethical. It is the response to Reason which we hear Cleanthes hymning from his Athenian Porch :

*" . . . nor higher meed belongs
E'en to the gods, than justly to adore
The universal law for evermore."*

And the good Immanuel Kant: "Act as if the principle of thy action were to become by thy will a Universal Law of Nature." This entirely qualitative impulse for law, for order, for unity is a first-rate scientific fact.

IV

With regard to the remaining value, all acknowledge that the goal of science is truth. In its original use *scientia* is simply knowledge; transliterated into English it stands for systematized knowledge. Moreover, the knowledge that science systematizes must be precise knowledge. This passion of science for precise knowledge is describable as a wholehearted devotion to truth; it is the pursuit of this supreme value which is the most commonplace fact of the scientific spirit. But granting this, is not truth to the scientist after all a purely quantitative matter? By precise knowledge does not our scientist mean perfect measurement? By fact does he not mean truth statistically tabulated?

It is just here we are at the crux of the whole matter. What, after all, is a fact? For my own part, I should be perfectly willing to agree that the goal of human knowledge would be a reality whose measurement is complete. The methods of laboratory men, however, reveal how impossible it is to achieve such a goal. If exact knowledge is a matter of perfect measurement, then alas for science in its search for truth, for perfect measurement is not attainable. The fact which was supposed to be the special possession of the exact scientist is something which, as he is well aware, he can never come to know. Your physicist is more than content if he can reduce the margin of error in his measurements to a smaller

figure than his predecessor's. If physical measurement with zero error is what is meant by fact then "fact" is but a synonym of "ideal." In other words, the fact which is the guiding star of the most exact scientist's activity is something he has never and will never in any finite time come across in his measurements; it is a pure ideal. The scientist's "fact" has ultimate affinity with the theological conception of completed knowledge within the mind of an omniscient God, and with the regulative ideal of God's perfected rule.

Our conclusion is reached. We have seen that we can no longer separate religion and science on the basis of a value-fact dichotomy. In the first place, religion has its statistical facts and science has its truth, beauty and goodness. In the second place, an inquiry into precise meanings reveals that we can no longer separate fact and value as if they were not interchangeable names for anything that can be accounted ultimate fact or anything that can be accounted ultimate value. It seems, on the one hand, that God must be nothing other than fact if religion is to be of genuine value; on the other hand, the facts which we thought were in the scientist's lap are immeasurable *x*'s whose factuality consists in their kinship with an ideal to which science progressively approximates. Religion and science are thus integrated into an intellectual unity. Both are equally interested in the realization of the same value-fact known to religion as God or the Kingdom of God; the principle of their dichotomy is simply the division of labor. Scientist and saint progress together on their pilgrimage to the pot of gold at the rainbow's foot.

Toward Organic Humanism

CURTIS W. REESE

I desire to indicate briefly but I hope comprehensively that organic humanism is a movement rooted in the most excellent traditions; that it possesses presuppositions, postulates, and a program capable of being stated as a self-consistent, organic whole; and that it furnishes fundamental criteria by means of which behavior may find its way through the current maze of conflicting philosophies and programs.

Lest I lay myself open to the charge of claiming too much for humanism, let me say quite definitely that humanism lays no claim to the exclusive possession of the fruits of man's long labors to understand himself and his environing situation, nor to a monopoly of the techniques of personal adjustments and social control. What humanism does claim, however, is that it consciously strives to integrate into an organic whole that which has been divided into the religious and the secular, to an extent somewhat greater than is commonly the case with other religious and cultural movements. While humanism rarely forgets that it is of the soil of human experience, with all that this implies in limitations and uncertainty, it nevertheless aspires to as complete an accounting of the human enterprise as is possible in the light of observational inquiry, critical analysis, and experimental tests.

Also organic humanism claims, with due reticence, that it is the natural outgrowth of the major humanist traditions, *i.e.*, cultural humanism, with its emphasis on non-theological social processes; scientific humanism, with its emphasis on the control of natural processes for human ends; democratic humanism, with its regard for each person as an end in himself; religious humanism, with its fervent loyalty to good works; and philosophical humanism, with its insistence on *Man the Measure*.

Undoubtedly there is some room for the criticism often heard that humanism may not properly claim to be a religion. It all depends, of course, on what definition of religion is taken into account. Without joining Humpty-Dumpty in his argument with Alice over who is to be master of words or whether they are to be

paid for overtime use, one may, I think, argue for the expansion and growth of the meanings attached to symbols, and so reasonably hold that religion is the integration of personality around committal to ideals, and that the religious is that quality of behavior that enhances personality. For the purposes of this paper, however, it makes no great difference whether humanism is or is not granted the status of a religion, since my aim is rather to present humanism as an organic philosophy of life in which the conventionally religious modes of thought and patterns of behavior play an important role, except as they may be subsumed in the larger thought of religion as committal to causes and goals.

While humanism centers its attention on the study and the enhancement of human life, it must, nevertheless, make clear its underlying assumptions, its working principles, and its practical aims if it wants to commend itself to the attention of thoughtful and serious-minded people. This I shall now attempt to do all too briefly in terms of presuppositions, postulates, and program.

I. *Presuppositions*

The basic assumptions of humanism have to do with the nature of the universe, the nature of man, and the nature of knowledge.

(1) As to the nature of the universe, the humanist regards it as the given and is not likely to speculate unduly on either the beginning or the end of things cosmic. In fact, he is inclined to doubt the applicability of such terms to the cosmic situation. In using the term *the given*, he does not mean to imply *a giver*. A commonly accepted statement of the general humanist thought in this matter is contained in Article I of the Humanist Manifesto, which reads: "Religious humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created." This is a statement that at least has the virtue of bringing the matter summarily to a close without becoming enmeshed in controversy over the nature of an uncaused cause. It goes without saying that this Article, like all other similar efforts to account for the given cosmic situation, leaves much to be desired for those of us who by nature are given to speculation and riddle-solving.

The humanist regards the universe as conditioning, but not determining, man's acts upon the world stage. This is a rather important assumption for a movement which, as will be seen later, lays great store by man's capacity for self-development, and upon

his ability to control his environing situation. Granting that the distinction between conditioning and determining is of limited applicability, it nevertheless provides a margin for the exercise of ingenuity in the enterprise of living. And while the universe, in the opinion of the humanist, is unconcerned about human good or ill, and provides no guaranty of the preservation of human values, it does furnish a condition in which things humanly worthwhile may grow and develop if cultivated with intelligent foresight.

It may very well be that the universe contains more for mankind than has ever yet been dreamed, but on the basis of existing knowledge the humanist is hesitant in assuming more than has been above indicated.

(2) A second presupposition has to do with the nature of man. The humanist regards man as organic to nature; as an emergent result of an evolutionary process; as native to the world—on a level possessing qualities, such as self-consciousness and powers of foresight, only dimly possessed, when at all, on lower and earlier levels of nature. Man is not to be thought of as a fixed part of nature, but as highly plastic and flexible; as a becoming being, with potentialities of development, particularly social development, far exceeding any yet known.

Man is a creator, in a unique sense, of his environing situation; he is a dreamer, with abilities to move himself in the directions of his dreams. He is not merely able to cooperate with the processes of the universe, but also within limits to guide, direct, and control these processes towards desired ends.

The humanist believes that the cosmic underwriting of man's dreams of a good life is not a prerequisite to a satisfactory planetary existence. In fact he is inclined to think that such a guaranty might militate against the zest and verve involved in uncertainty.

(3) A third presupposition is that knowledge at best is inferential, instrumental, and relative, consequently he has no reliance on either revelation or intuition. Bodies of knowledge are regarded as intellectual abstractions, inferred from experience; as functions of purposes; and as relative to the cultural stage in which they occur. Hence, the pursuit of knowledge is a quest for uncertainty. This is the basis of the humanist's insistence on tentativeness, even in relation to his most precious values.

II. *Postulates*

When the humanist reaches the stage of working principles or postulates, he begins to feel a bit more sure of his ground, although still admitting a high degree of tentativeness.

(1) A first postulate is that the chief concern of the human enterprise is the effort to discover, invent, and enhance ways of behavior and qualities of living that will meet human needs with the maximum of satisfaction. This means more specifically the centering of attention on the human situation, with concern for things cosmic only to the extent that they appear to have some understandable bearing on known conditions, needs, and possibilities. That humanism is anthropocentric rather than theocentric is a common saying; but what is not so generally understood is that humanism is similarly anthropocentric in relation to the whole cosmic situation, and this includes its relation to any moral or spiritual order that may in fact exist. While humanists accept the universe for whatever it may be found to be,—perhaps because as Carlyle put it, "Egad you'd better,"—so far as I know humanists feel no primary loyalty to the universe as such.

There is, however, among humanists a passionate loyalty to human well-being, and a great committal to the effort to find out what in fact constitute man's needs and how these needs may be met with the maximum of satisfaction, not to the greatest number but to each person. In pursuance of this quest, the humanist is likely to rely on the various appropriate sciences.

The needs of man are those of a biological being, a personal being, and a social being. Hence, humanists are concerned to discover, invent, and enhance ways of behavior that will provide a biological being with food, shelter, clothing, and such physiological experiences as may be necessary or desirable on the biological level; a personal being, with conditions conducive to freedom, venturesomeness, creativity, a sense of security, and esthetic enjoyment; and a social being, with such opportunities as lend themselves to the meeting of man's need for response, companionship, love, and a feeling of being at home in his world. These specifics, however, are not to be thought of as exhaustive or final, but are here used merely to indicate in general the objects of the humanist's major concern.

(2) A second postulate of humanism is that the most dependable procedure thus far found in the human enterprise for determining what man's needs are and how they may best be met is the scientific method—involving observational inquiry, rational analysis, and experimental tests. The humanist would not of course want to be understood as regarding scientific method as absolute. He appraises scientific method within the framework of his presupposition regarding the nature of knowledge, viz., as relative to his purposes. Having abandoned revelation and intuition as dependable ways of finding out reliable facts on which to base behavior, the humanist joins large areas of the modern world in leaning heavily on a method of procedure in problem-solving that has demonstrably won wide acceptance in all fields and that has large achievements to its credit not only in the development of the arts and instrumentalities of civilization but also in the establishment of moods and modes of life that have great possibilities in the development of a unified world.

The humanist does not, of course, hold that the same kind of specific scientific process that is applicable to analysis of a steel beam is applicable to the analysis of esthetic experience; but he does hold that the same large process of observation, of rational analysis, and of experimentation will lead to such understanding in the esthetic field as is capable of communication. The division of the field whereby science deals with things and religion with values, the humanist rejects as arbitrary and unwarranted.

It will be noted, however, that the humanist holds to no little and narrow physical science as adequate to serve man's larger ends; but that he incorporates into the scientific method whatever procedures do in fact involve objectivity, analysis, and testing. Already this larger way of inquiry has won its spurs in the various fields of the humanities, including religion; and it is now too well established to take second place to revelation and intuition, however redefined, or to uncriticised experience however potent.

Humanism guides its inquiries, formulates its hopes, and utilizes its means, in the light of scientific method, believing that in this method lies man's chief hope of controlling and directing the processes of nature for human purposes and ends to such an extent as the nature of the given will allow.

(3) A third postulate of humanism is that the criterion of values in the human enterprise is their tested worth in the meeting of human needs. The humanist in common with much of modern thought holds that values are things valued, and that in general they are relative to their cultural setting; that values are natural rather than transcendental, human rather than cosmic, experimental rather than final.

But increasingly the humanist finds himself dissatisfied with these generalities, however valid they may be. He wants a genuinely experimental axiology with tests to determine whether any given value does in fact serve human needs. This he believes will require not only the most rigorous effort to find out what are the basic human needs, but also the most critically objective examination to determine whether things valued should on the basis of their service to human ends be valued or whether they should be condemned; and conversely whether things now condemned should in fact be valued. Undoubtedly the offering of a goat as a sacrifice to the Goddess Kali is a value in India, as is the climbing of the steps of Pilate's judgment seat in Rome. But the important thing is to determine whether these values, and others like them, meet the test of serving human needs in the best way possible in given circumstances.

Moreover, humanism strives not only for a thoroughly experimental and human axiology that will set itself the task of finding out what really serves man's needs, it also strives to bring about a committal of man to the love of such values, not for the sake of the values but for the sake of mankind's well-being.

It is not enough to foster values that have been received by tradition, or that have appeared to a few men in ecstatic states, or that have led myriads of men to lay down their lives. The important thing is to find out objectively what really meets human needs and to foster such things. And while the humanist lays no claim to signal success in this endeavor, he does claim to have recognized the problem a bit more clearly, and to be somewhat more insistent on the importance of its solution in the light of its human setting, than is generally the case with thought in this field.

(4) A fourth postulate of humanism is that the goal of the human enterprise is a world community of free persons voluntarily and intelligently cooperating for the common weal to the greatest

extent made possible by the nature of the world, of men, and of society.

In this regard, the humanist is not equating a world community to the Kingdom of God, which he assumes has at least some relation to an overworld. What he means is a community of, by, and for humankind. He is interested in subworlds and overworlds only to such extent as such human conceptions might possibly be found useful means to worldly ends.

The humanist thinks of this goal of the human enterprise in terms that span the continents and seas, and that ignore the boundaries of race. He includes the whole range of man's physical, intellectual, and esthetic interests in a grand conception of a unified world wherein all institutions exist for man and may be made and re-made in accordance with patterns that are native to the growing intelligence of mankind.

III. *The Program of Humanism*

The building of a self-consistent philosophy, whether of a theistic or a humanistic kind, is no great task. Any logically-minded person who is careful to remember his basic assumptions should be able to turn out at least the outline of a comprehensive idea-system, as recreation at the end of a busy day. The real test comes in formulating a program of action that has some relation to the world of actual events. Here the humanist is in somewhat the same predicament as other theorists. His advantage, if such it is, lies in his readiness to abandon traditional loyalties without a feeling that the world has collapsed because some pre-scientific dogma has been found unrelated to the needs of the human enterprise.

I do not claim that humanism is yet ready, or will ever be, with a complete blueprint of a just and satisfactory social order. It is possible, however, to indicate the general direction that a humanist program will take. The following points, at least, would be involved in a humanist program:

(1) A broadening of the conception of the development of personality, and of the nature and scope of education in this process.

Personality development means: (1) the gradual incorporation of socially approved patterns of behavior into one's inner accepted standards of conduct; (2) the reconciliation of inner desires with

external demands; (3) the building of self-consistent sets of desires in the light of environmental requirements; and (4) the acquiring of the ability to live the present knowingly according to necessity, and to plan the future intelligently according to ideals. Obviously, the requirements of this process cannot be met by any kind of short cuts, spiritual or otherwise. There is need for a revamping of our understanding of the educational process to include the interplay that is constantly taking place between man and his environmental situation. Within the limits of the given, personality development takes place in the normal interplay of man with his environing situation, including his physical and particularly his cultural setting. And while the familiar institutions of home, school, and church are parts of the environmental situation, they play a far less important role in personality development than has been supposed. Any planned effort to improve mankind must aim, if it hopes for success, at nothing less than the exercise of the maximum possible control over the total area of culture, including material as well as non-material traits. Therefore, the distinction between religious education and secular education must be abolished, and education itself made synonymous with the learning process in all areas of human experience.

(2) A keener appreciation of the relationship of means to ends in the achievement of desired goals, and a frank abandonment of mystic practices in favor of more realistic procedures.

Not only in scientific practice but also in the ordinary ways of life, reliance on means to produce ends is universally required. Yet, strange enough, in large areas of mankind, hopes and wishes are not implemented by appropriate means, and there is still large reliance on the ability of hopes and wishes to bring about unmediated results; and the institutions designed to cultivate good wishes are reluctant to invent the means necessary to make good wishes effective.

The humanist believes that whatever demonstrable good may be effected by the rituals of worship is so only within the framework of means, and he is inclined to believe that such means are on the whole inadequate to the ends sought. Consequently he abandons them, or revamps them in ways that he believes will make them adequate means to such humanistically valid ends as self-reliance, cooperative loyalties, and esthetic enjoyment.

(3) Participation in the goods of life by all the people to the limits of their capacity, without distinctions based on the accidents of birth; and rewards, whether material or honorific, based solely on merit.

To the humanist, as increasingly to others also, it appears that the resources of the world are adequate to meet the needs of all the world; and that the elimination of exploitation and monopoly, and the building of cooperative guaranties of security, are causes charged with ethical and spiritual significance of the first order. And he can see no justification for traditional and current practices, however sanctified by custom, where the accident of birth counts for more than merit in matters involving the securing of both the goods and the rewards of life.

When the humanist uses the term Brotherhood, which he rarely does because of its association with piety divorced from the appropriate behavior, he means to imply precisely those qualities and characteristics—such as kinship, equality, association, and mutual helpfulness—that are involved in genuine family life.

(4) Reorganization of social processes and redistribution of social forces to make possible a society of free men intelligently co-operating for common ends.

This will involve the testing of all institutions by social standards, the building of social forms designed to serve all the people; and the rounding out of the concept of liberty by giving it more concrete content.

To what extent all this will require the elimination, or the overthrow, or the wasting away of hallowed institutions, no man can say. It is to be hoped that the future can grow out of the present in a way to preserve "all the good the past hath had"; but at whatever costs to ancient values, a new and great social design is called for; and humanists believe that this design can be made real only by people whose sole motive is human well-being.

Professor Otto on Science and God

SIDNEY S. ROBINS

In Professor Otto's interesting article in the Spring number of *THE JOURNAL OF LIBERAL RELIGION*, entitled "Can Science Accept God?" he defines the terms, faces science and God with one another, sees them totally refuse to be acquainted, and then says: "This I am bound to believe is the situation." One had conceived the philosophy he presents as a possible philosophy, but had stopped short at that. His simple finality touched off a desire for further discussion.

Mr. Otto begins by urging that since both "science" and "God" have wide fringes of meaning, the preliminary task is to find the most representative definition of each term.

Science he defines in a way that at first blush almost suggests "exact science." For it is a method that requires "rigorously exact proof." Some elasticity is perhaps provided when the phrase "objective verification" is substituted. But, again, we are told the method must be "experimentally decisive."

Since there are some subject-matters in which it is impossible to have the same kind of exactness one gets in physical or chemical experiments, the scientific method can hardly be equally exact in all fields in which scientists are occupying themselves. Can it be experimentally decisive in all? If science has to be that, it is difficult to see how there can be a science of politics, or economics, or sociology. Many people are today putting their faith either in democracy or totalitarianism as the true political ideal. But these faiths can hardly rest upon decisive past experiment. One suspects that in the future there will continue to be grounds for denying that any experiment is decisive. If democracy seems to fail, or totalitarianism, some will say that, on the contrary, they have never been tried, have not had a fair chance. An important question in our politics just now is whether "rugged individualism" has failed, or whether it has not been given a chance since 1932.

Some philosophers have thought that an idea which helps to give sense to experience thereby shows experimental consequences that we can afford to take cognizance of. Emerson and William James, among others, have argued that a belief that gives room for

men's deepest and most permanent drives and tendencies (not their desires) is more likely to be true than a belief that denies such room. On this ground James argued against a philosophy of determinism, saying that a doctrine which made nonsense of man's most basic instinct of all, namely the instinct to activity, creation and achievement, could hardly be a true doctrine. This did not hinder him from being a strenuous empiricist. One can reject his concession to rationalism of course. *Prima facie* it is only a respectable current in philosophy. But it would seem harder to deny that the definition of science as a method of exact proof or decisive experiment is very hard to apply in some of the fields in which men are trying to be scientific.

In defining "God," Mr. Otto seeks what he calls "the least common denominator" of historic ideas of God. This least common denominator he finds in what we may call the supernatural, or, more concretely, the special-providence theory of God. God is separate from man. He is an efficient cause in human affairs, but not one whose ways can be scientifically known. He is personal.

Of course we should be grateful to anyone who defines the idea of God he is going to carry into a theological argument. Too often we get the argument first, presenting all the intangibility of a cloud. This is better. But if a writer is presently going to say that he *must* believe the relations of God and science to be thus-and-so, and intends trying to corral us all, it is important that the definitions be persuasive. Is this one persuasive?

Supernaturalism and Naturalism

It would be easy to make an impressive list of religious thinkers who have not held a definitely dualistic, or supernaturalistic, idea of God. In such a list I rather think we might include Zoroaster, Ikhnaton, Aristotle, Plotinus, Origen, Synesius, Scotus Erigena, Thomas a Kempis, Hegel, Emerson, Royce—just as prominent samples. On the other hand it somehow seems to me more difficult to find religious *thinkers* who are clearly supernaturalists. Some would undoubtedly put Plato into this camp, but for those who see how the intellectual master of us all combines poet and philosopher, there is a doubt about this. Other prominent nominees for the label of "supernaturalist" would doubtless be St. Paul, St. Augustine, Descartes (this last especially in the light of his Occasionalist disciples). Possibly someone might be led to include William James.

And then there is Thomas Aquinas, whom liberals have not read and do not intend to. Misgivings about some or all of these occur.

It is difficult at this moment to recall anything in St. Paul that suggests belief in a special providence who responds to prayer with hammer-strokes of interfering power. There is a whole lot about a natural conflict between flesh and spirit, which he seems to think has native roots in everybody. His idea of revelation is a bit evolutionary: "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth, waiting for the revelation of the sons of God." As for God: "in Him we live and move and have our being." Against this is the account of his profound conversion, written by a mystic and an orator.

There are passages in St. Augustine which sound the opposite of supernaturalistic: "What is it I know when I know Thee? It is a happy life I know." In fact, St. Augustine shows philosophical indigestion after a plethoric meal of various systems. The Middle Ages made something simple out of his *Credo ut intelligam* and a few other hints; and evangelical religion another something simple out of his conversion story.

There is no doubt Descartes was a *dualist*, but his dualism was originally within nature, a dualism of matter and mind; and the theological use of this dualism, along with the supposed function of the pineal gland in providing a point of contact for divine intelligence and earthly matter, seems to have been a more or less conventional reflection of popular mediaeval theology.

Can it be that strict supernaturalism, special providences and the Sunday-School-book-engraving orientation represent largely the popularizing of the religious ideas of the greater thinkers? Of course such popular views are enormously important in history. So are the patriotic dramatizations of history. So are the supernatural views of the founders of the American government, especially the writers of the Constitution; the immaculate personal Washington of the cherry tree incident and the early biographies—typical of other all-perfect heroes; the "American Democracy" which is not an ideal of free speech and trust in open discussion, but a perfect system of government which never was on sea or land. Popular institutions seem to be founded upon ideas of the supernatural when not just upon surprising facts. Mr. Dakin seems to argue that Christian Science was not founded upon any ideas at all, at least not upon the ones found in *Science and Health*; but upon healing testimonies.

If someone did mention William James as a supernaturalist, it would be because of his insistence that new religious impulse would come into the world only with the revelation of new and surprising facts of religious experience.

Meantime, it is rather obvious that the inheritance of religious Liberals is very largely from the monistic or pluralistic camps rather than the dualistic-supernatural. In general, I believe they think of God simply as a natural power, greater than themselves, that helps in the struggles for salvation and progress.

The term "naturalism," used once by Professor Otto to describe his own philosophy, seems to me to confuse the question it was intended to help solve. The trouble is that part of the time it is used to oppose "supernaturalism"; but on other occasions is used as the legitimate opponent of "idealism." Idealism means in practice not only Platonic idealism but any philosophy which holds that purpose in man reflects purpose, or direction, in nature; or which adopts an organic or holistic view of things in opposition to a mechanistic one. It has always appeared to me that the essential question in dispute between the two great schools of Greek philosophy (Platonic-Aristotelian and Democritean) was over which party had the better philosophy of nature. It was certainly not a simple dispute between naturalists and supernaturalists. Nevertheless current usage gives complete monopoly of the term "naturalism" to the Democritean type of philosophy.

It is also not an unimportant fact that when a man makes the physical more basically real than the spiritual, or implies this by his exaltation of the kind of proof that is possible only in the physical sciences, many people straightway recall the question of determinism. They suppose, with Huxley, that it is implied in such a naturalistic philosophy that if a cosmic mind, at any moment in the distant past, had known the location of every atom of matter and every ion of energy, then that mind could have surely foretold the whole course of cosmic history since, and every incident. This probably is hard to swallow. And some of these readers also know that this kind of determinism is anathema to many confrères of Mr. Otto who teach evolutionary naturalism. Are the difficulties of "scientific determinism" any objection to this present type of naturalism, until they are satisfactorily solved? Are they a practical difficulty until disposed of so that the wayfaring man shall not err therein? Of course they are not the kind of objection, or difficulty,

that can weigh much if determinism can be proved by decisive experiment. But can it?

Well, meantime, if science is experimental demonstration and if God is a supernatural person, we are certainly back with Huxley at another point, and ready for his suggestion that we try medicine on one hospital and prayer on another. Neither side could object to the experiment, and it would be decisive. There can indeed be no relation between such a science and such a God, except square-cut opposition. On the one hand natural law; on the other unnatural interference.

But surely there are less simple ways of viewing the situation.

Freedom or Sovereignty for Science?

Professor Otto says several times that science must have independence, or autonomy. Once, however, he uses the phrase "sovereignty for science" as if sovereignty and independence were the same thing. But surely there is a difference. This identification may be an inadvertence, or it may reflect a sort of lack of interest in the distinction on the part of one who holds that science is both independent and sovereign. But there appears a danger of ambiguity entering a discussion where a distinction so central is passed over even for a moment.

Of course much depends here upon the definition of science with which we are working. If by science we follow Mr. Otto's original suggestion and mean the sphere of rigorous, exact proof, or decisive experimentation, it is obvious that science would have sovereignty (more than freedom) in all fields where it is applicable. "There is no use disputing about matters of fact," a friend used to say. Surely, if the problem admits of decisive experiment, we ought to decide it and have done. But there seem to be problems that cannot be settled by decisive experiment, and plenty of them for which we only hope to be able, some day, to set up an experiment.

If science (in another sense) means the application of all the careful observation, experiment and measurement that the particular subject-matter admits of, plus reflection and comparison with the rest of knowledge, then indeed science would be not only independent but everywhere sovereign. It is hard to see how any other method of approach to problems can have any intellectual status at all. Surely we are not at liberty to overlook whatever relevant facts and observations there be, in dealing with any prob-

lems. People who set up mere emotional desires and preferences as premises, or who refuse the rigors of intellectual carefulness in their thought, or who ignore facts, should command little attention from anyone. Opposition to this science is grounded largely in subconscious forces, frequently conservative, always irrational. Of course this definition of science is merely that which I should have proposed as most to the purpose.

But it appears to me that the definition of science Mr. Otto is actually working with in talking about autonomy-sovereignty is neither of these, but yet a third. He now appears to mean by science the sphere of explanation by the laws of cause and effect. "It is a commonplace," he says, "that scientific achievement is the direct result of a radical change . . . from explanation in terms of a Final Cause to explanation in terms of secondary causes." This means, one supposes, Baconian science, the kind Bacon eulogized when denouncing Aristotle. Final causes mean roughly purposes, ends. We are to leave these out of the picture and study the world of things in terms of efficient causes,—beginnings or origins. Bacon wanted first of all to free the human mind from the habit of explaining everything by reference to God's will; but it was also implied in the method that we interpret nature without reference to possible goals of a plural sort, including human ideals or purposes. It is the explanation that in practice begins with like factors and develops their general laws. It is the centripetal method of explanation as opposed to the centrifugal, the stimulus-reflex method against the introspective and in part the Gestaltist method. Its final picture of nature is a system of natural laws that covers all fields of investigation like as the waters cover the sea.

Historically and in practical impact, the method has tended to deflate human ideals by explaining them in terms of geographic, biological, economic and other factors working out of the environment upon the seemingly goal-seeking organism.

What of the autonomy and supremacy of this causal science? Of its autonomy, independence, I take it there can be no question any more than in the case of the other definitions of science. One does not suppose there is anything in the world which cannot be generalized about. There should be absolutely no limitations put upon such study. The fact that nature, from electron to man, may be seen in the mass and interpreted in a generalized way, based up-

on deep and pervasive unities of type, may be a merely practical fact; but it is the basis of the unquestioned power of all the natural sciences, of insurance tables, of election prediction by surveys, and so on.

But the sovereignty of this science, that is to say its finality, would seem perhaps to be a horse of a different color. Sovereignty would seem to imply that the generalizations own the facts instead of the facts owning the generalizations. It is another commonplace in philosophy that natural laws are different from human laws in their bearings. They are not seen or known to rule, control, their subjects. They are empirical generalizations, always subject to possible exception; always apparently, in the course of time, requiring closer statement; always approaching the possibly unique facts in a way that resembles our attempt to explain a person to somebody else by multiplying adjectives and descriptive phrases. No person is identical with any list of general statements I can make about him.

If the sovereignty of science implies that there is not an individual factor in nature as well as a general, a factor that some philosophies suppose to be more significant in humans than in electrons; or even if it implies the impossibility of the universe itself being in some sense an individual: then it seems to be prejudging a rather vital issue. Some say that all causal laws are of the nature of insurance statistics, powerful in mass-effect only. What causal science does is to draw off the general aspect and leave the individual. The power of this science is a power of abstraction, of abstracting away from a part of the facts. It gives you man, American, philosopher; but never an individual man, American, philosopher. That deficit is left perhaps to the artist, or novelist, to make good. He aims expressly at giving us individual situations and people.

With reference to belief in God, perhaps the situation is suggested by this question: if God happens to be an individual being of any sort, supreme or finite that is,—this last as William James, for example, suggested; and if science is a generalizing process, how could science relate itself to God? One supposes that science would relate itself by discovering some more laws of nature, or of that part of nature which is God. It could hardly be expected to discover God, since it cannot even discover a single man. We are reminded of St. Augustine's remark that not to *know* God is not to

see Him. Perhaps that is mystical nonsense, but it makes the point that God is not a generalization. We are also reminded of Hegel's assertion that the understanding (*Verstand*), which was the tool of abstract generalization, has no religion. Science could do its proper business without affirming or denying that there was such an individual as God, just as it can discover many truths about man without admitting there is a single genuinely individual man. For it can, and sometimes does, treat that individuality as if it were mere delusion.

The supremacy of the generalizing method has for its reverse side the denial of the individual. The modern form of Fatalism, which is scientific determinism, explains all of us individuals (*sic*) in terms of laws. If such a science were willing to be a bit poetical and imaginative in expression, it *might* claim to be a complete demonstration of Calvin's predestinating God—minus of course some special traditional features.

Dualism in Nature

It would appear today that the most difficult dualism for thought to deal with is not between natural and supernatural; nor, within nature, between mind and matter, or body and spirit. Rather it is between universal or general on the one hand, and individual on the other. But there seems no reason for science's denying the existence of individuality anywhere in nature, unless it has the will to be completely decisive and sovereign. That would perhaps constitute a case of the will-to-believe, or rather not-to-believe.

Near the end of his article, Mr. Otto speaks in a way which implies a dualism, or conflict, of reality and human ideals. Well, there are many who would think the possibility of practical idealism rests upon the reality of the individual factor in the world. Otherwise the realities would swallow up the ideals. If a man is not an original source of creativity, or if he is wholly explicable in terms of sovereign "secondary causes," then morality is a false front for mechanism and people can have enthusiasm for ideals only when they are not conscious of the strings being pulled.

Danger in Ideas

In our age, as in past ones, people argue against ideas on the ground of danger. John Dewey is afraid of the emotions of people hindering scientific progress and social advance. Who can blame him? Religious liberals and all thinking people see how the

springs of nationalistic, racial, class feelings pour forth their torrents of unreason and destroy the vision of man as man, the hopes of international brotherhood, the possibilities of peace. The same people are afraid of wild religions like Mrs. Eddy's, or Rosenberg's, or Father Divine's, which flow from muddy spring-heads. They are also afraid of Fundamentalist opposition to evolution, to birth control, to free schools, to the psychological interpretation of revivalistic religious phenomena, and to the autonomy of science.

Perhaps it is out of these fears that arises the present tendency to magnify "science" and to foreclose on the frontiers not only of mysticism but also of many realms in which exact science and final demonstration are a bit out of place. Religious speculation has always been dangerous, and there are current reasons for wanting to put it in bonds and confining ones at that. But on the other hand, democracy is dangerous—few things more so. And art is dangerous, the movie for example. We have in the movie an unrecognized annex to our school system, highly commercialized. Plato would have regarded swing music as dangerous. Probably there are people who would abolish democracy and emasculate a lot of modern art on the ground of danger.

Well, when one has once made up his mind that the only safe place is the cemetery, the sense of burden is somehow a bit lightened. Nobody can afford to be ruled by his fears. General Grant tells us in his autobiography that when he was frightened before a battle he took courage from the recollection that the enemy were just as frightened as he. How are we to decide who is to be allowed to indulge his fright? In the nineteenth century the good churchmen fought off Darwinian evolution as dangerous to morality. It would be a curious reversal if now, in the twentieth century, scientists went out of their way to oppose belief in God upon the ground that such belief is inimical to man's personal sense of responsibility for his own and the world's future. There is dispute about the effect of some theistic beliefs, and of what Mr. Otto calls the "fringes" of the idea of God. But in any case some of the objectors to any theology appear to be animated by fears for morality—the kind they believe in of course. It would be an odd spectacle if scientists exchanged roles with the bishops who fought Darwin. The first scientific question is: What is the truth of the matter? Let the truth even be dangerous!

Some Recent Books on Democracy and Religion

THE EDITOR

I have just been reading Henry Adams' novel *Democracy*, published anonymously in 1880. One might wish that Adams could have written this novel after he had penned *The Education* and *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres*, that is, after he had developed his philosophy of history interpreting the modern period of Western civilization as a shift from the worship of the Virgin to the worship of the dynamo. The novel might then have set forth more clearly Adams' view of the relations between democracy and religion. As it is, the book reveals the way in which Adams' romantic faith of the pre-Civil War period was shattered by his first-hand view of American democracy in the Reconstruction period. Living in Washington after the War, he early came to the conclusion that his optimism about democracy was wholly unwarranted. In the wake of his loss of faith he wrote this novel. Speaking of the character in the novel who probably serves as his mouthpiece, he describes her motive in going to Washington to "observe" the workings of democracy: Hers "was the feeling of a passenger on an ocean steamer whose mind will not give him rest until he has been in the engine-room and talked with the engineer. She wanted to see with her own eyes the action of primary forces; to touch with her own hand the massive machinery of society; to measure with her own mind the capacity of the motive power. She was bent upon getting to the heart of the great American mystery of democracy and government." In the outcome, she finds that the primary force in American democracy is the unscrupulous ambition of the politician. Later on Adams was to depict the ambition of the politician as irresistibly drawn into the vortex of vaster impersonal forces, coal, iron, and electrical energy,—a vortex that would bring to an end the age of mechanical energy which had succeeded the age of faith. "Prolonged one generation longer," he believed this "movement from unity into multiplicity" would require "a new social mind."

What with the phenomenal rise of Fascism, Russian Communism, and Nazism since Adams' time, we have witnessed a vengeful return from multiplicity to "unity" that he may not even

have dreamed of. Hence, today we are less inclined than formerly to question whether "a new social mind" is necessary for the maintenance of a civilized human society. Some of us have been persuaded to recognize this need by certain contemporary social philosophies that purport to neutralize the acids of modernity. Others have been led to a new appreciation of the centripetal forces of society by the attempt of the churches both here and abroad, to make evident again "the tie that binds." But most of us have come to it through experiencing the socially destructive effects of the engulfing vortex of mechanical energy with its attendant,—atomistic, rugged individualism. In all of these ways, then, we have learned what Henry Adams meant when he asserted that democracy is doomed if it can produce nothing more than "an infinite mass of conflicting minds and of conflicting interests." We know from bitter experience that the anti-social mind, as Adams says, is bound to disintegrate into "what is, in substance, a vapor, which loses in collective intellectual energy in proportion to the perfection of its expansion." Hence, there is now a growing sense of need for "a new social mind."

It is not alone the philosophers, the theologians, and the "cultural critics" who today recognize the necessity for a *Bindung* that will help men to ascend, rather than descend, to meet. The scientists are also becoming aware of the need for a common faith sufficiently powerful at least to guard the precious tradition of unhampered scientific research. Indeed, Professor Ogburn of the University of Chicago has recently suggested that if the forces of tyranny continue to gain strength, the scientists may eventually see the wisdom of recognizing that freedom for research can be preserved only through an alliance with the churches that defend freedom of worship. Thus some of the scientists are beginning to realize that there are certain values that they cherish in common with the Christians. The findings of the scientists may be incompatible with Christian faith, but the spirit of freedom for science is bound up with the spirit of freedom in religion. If the one goes, the other goes too.¹

But even the *findings* of the scientists are also in some quarters

¹In connection with the increasing sense of social responsibility among the scientists, reference should be made here to the widely influential book by the British chemist, J. D. Bernal: *The Social Function of Science* New York: The Macmillan Company. 1939. \$3.50.

leading to a new awareness of the relations between the common life and religion. Most conspicuous among these findings are those of the anthropologists, as so ably presented by Talcott Parsons' survey of the views of Durkheim, Weber and others in his *The Structure of Social Action*. Of special interest to the theologian are the sections in this book devoted to a discussion of the social value of ritual in primitive society. Space does not permit our giving an account here of this immense volume, but mention may be made of a smaller book on a similar theme. I refer to an unusually valuable brochure by the British anthropologist, A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, formerly visiting professor at the University of Chicago.² The central theme of this lecture is compressed into a single sentence by the author: "The first necessary condition of the existence of a society is that the individual members shall agree in some measure in the values that they recognize." These agreements are given expression in the symbols and rituals by which an orderly society "maintains itself in existence, serving as they do to establish certain fundamental social values."

But it is not alone the anthropologists who are today uncovering the roots of society. At Yale University within recent years a great deal of attention has been directed to the role of agreement, as manifest in rite and symbol, in "the making of society." Jurists, sociologists, psychologists, historians of politics and religion, have cooperated in this study. As a result, a whole series of volumes has appeared, including Thurman Arnold's *The Symbols of Government* and *The Folklore of Capitalism*, the late Edward S. Robinson's *The Law and the Lawyers*, E. R. Goodenough's *Religious Tradition and Myth*, Wilbur M. Urban's *Language and Reality*, to mention a few representative titles. Of particular interest to churchmen should be the most recent volume to emanate from the Yale group.³

Professor Gabriel, drawing upon a rich learning that takes into its purview science, religion, philosophy, literature, politics, law, economics, and even folklore, provides us with a discerning account of the agreements and also the rituals that have, since the year 1815, given expression to the fundamental social values of Ameri-

²A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *Taboo*. The Frazer Lecture of 1939, Cambridge University. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1939. 47 pp. \$90.

³Ralph Henry Gabriel, *The Course of American Democratic Thought*. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1940. 452 pp. \$3.50.

can democratic culture. Of course, only the gist of such a volume can be given here. Aside from stressing here the fact that the relations between religion and democracy are in this book delineated with rare understanding, if not with depth of insight, we should mention briefly the four principal doctrines of the democratic faith that Professor Gabriel has distilled from his data. The first of these doctrines, a doctrine that has been expressed (and at times whittled down) in a great variety of ways in the past century, is "the doctrine of a higher or fundamental law," the belief in the "existence of a moral order which was not the creation of man, but which served as the final guide of his behavior." "Before the moral law all men stood on a footing of equality; from it they derived equal rights." The second doctrine is that of the free individual. The third doctrine is that of the mission of America, perhaps best expressed by Mr. Justice Story in 1826: "We stand the latest, and if we fail, probably the last experiment of self-government by the people." And the fourth doctrine has been the belief in the philosophy of progress. The attempts to harmonize the potentially antagonistic doctrines of the fundamental law, the free individual, and nationalism, have given rise to most of the contradictions and tensions in American democracy. Each of these doctrines has in its turn been exaggerated,—the doctrine of the fundamental law has been interpreted deterministically and thus has led to the denial of liberty, the doctrine of the free individual has been made into a justification for rugged individualism and anarchy, and the doctrine of progress has at times been perverted into the escalator view of history. And the doctrine of the mission of America, which has been interpreted nationalistically, has been magnified "almost beyond recognition." These exaggerations must needs be checked if the democratic ship of state is to be kept on its course. Hence, the author concludes that the achievement of democracy depends upon "a balance between liberty and authority, between the self-expression of the free individual and the necessary coercion of the organized group. . . . The democratic faith is, then, in essence a philosophy of the mean. It proclaims that, within broad limits of an ordered nature, man is master of his destiny." This last sentence would seem to indicate a humanistic bias on the part of the author. But his humanism has affinities with traditional religion, as becomes evident in his castigation of the

pragmatists and of the cynicism and "hard naturalism" of Thurman Arnold. This antipathy for merely secular, scientific humanism becomes evident also when the author insists that the essence of democracy is faith. "Not one of its doctrines can be proved in any scientific sense." Indeed, the fact that scientific research demands personal integrity is given as evidence of the dependence of both democracy and science upon a recognition of a "higher law."

Enough has been said to indicate the scope of this treatment of American democratic thought, though unfortunately no adequate impression of its richness of detail can be given here. Much attention is, of course, devoted to the Unitarians and the Congregationalists, and the ups and downs of the clergy's belief in providence, progress, science, and the Social Gospel, as well as of their belief in nationalism and in the Carnegie "gospel of wealth" are spread out on this spacious panorama. The chapters on Melville and Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.—to turn our glance from the clergy to a novelist and a jurist—are of special significance in the author's treatment of religion. The "tragic sense" of the one and the flexible amalgam of scepticism, freedom and faith in the other, would seem to have anticipated the new social mind of the twentieth century.

But Professor Gabriel is not content with a history that traces only the course of doctrine. He insists that the American democratic community has been made conscious of itself through rite and symbol. The discussion of the various types of symbol and rite that have figured in the rise of American civilization is one of the most stimulating the present writer has seen. It must suffice here to indicate that the author identifies two symbols (with the appropriate rituals accompanying them) as of central significance down to the Civil War, namely, Washington and the Declaration of Independence; and after the War, he finds these symbols waning in favor of Abraham Lincoln and the Constitution.

Emerson had "thought that telegraphs and newspapers, that books of history and of biography, that scientific historical criticism and doctrines of evolution had put an end to such folk mythology as had transformed Odin into a God. . . . Yet twentieth century generations, who never saw Lincoln in the flesh, who thought they were scientific, and who were sure they were sophisticated, elevated the dead Lincoln to the status of a demi-god.

. . . By so little is the twentieth century after Christ separated from the fifth before His coming."

This euhemerizing process is traced in its course from Emerson and Whitman down through Edwin Markham, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Vachel Lindsay, and John Drinkwater. (The next edition will have to include the contribution of Robert Sherwood.) We cannot discuss the author's description of the ritual that has grown up around the symbol. But evidence is not needed for the proposition that Lincoln "personifies the faith upon which the Republic rests." As Woodrow Wilson once remarked, the phenomenon of Lincoln makes it possible to believe in democracy. (And so we have here in our own century a capital instance of the significance and the morphology of Christology.)

When one reads these chapters on the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and on Washington and Lincoln, and the chapter on Mr. Justice Holmes, one sees that the campaign slogans of the moment represent only a carapace; but it is a carapace that conceals nothing less than a religious faith. Over and over again in the history of these States that faith has achieved vibrant expression. Take this paragraph, for example, from Holmes's address at the dedication of the new Hall of the Boston University School of Law in 1897:

"A man may live greatly in the law as well as elsewhere; there as well as elsewhere his thought may find its unity in an infinite perspective; there as well as elsewhere he may wreak himself upon life, may drink the bitter cup of heroism, may wear his heart out after the unattainable. All that life offers any man from which to start his thinking or his striving is a fact. And if this universe is one universe, if it is so far thinkable that you can pass in reason from one part to another, it does not matter very much what that fact is. . . . Your business as thinkers is to make plainer the way from something to the whole of things; to show the rational connection between your fact and the frame of the universe."

It is precisely the loss of this "infinite perspective" that Waldo Frank in his most recent book⁴ says is the cause of the degradation of democratic dogma, "*a failure to see reality*," a failure to "carry on the great tradition [from Greece, Palestine, and the Middle Ages] of man's vision of himself and of his destiny, *into the present processes of living*." The fulcrum of this dynamic for the demo-

⁴*Chart for Rough Water*. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1940. 182 pp. \$1.50.

cratic way of life is, he says, the reality of "the individual linked in his own essence and integrally with the universal."⁵ In Mr. Frank's view, the rationalists,⁶ the romanticists, the pragmatists, the Marxists, and the Fascists have all tried to fulfil human destiny without benefit of this fulcrum. They have overlooked the fact that the basically human element in existence is something pre-rational (and not irrational, as most of these philosophies have supposed). By pre-rational the author indicates "man's initial contact with life and sense of living." The prime heresy of our day is an empirical rationalism that "demands of a *contingent* force" (heredity-environment) that "it make over the environment whence it issues! Out of touch with the mainsprings of creative human power, they [the pragmatists and their kin] are indeed like sedulous engineers building a bridge *over* and *with* the crust of a volcano." The historical rootages of this heresy and of the "Great Tradition" which provides its correctives are set forth with brevity but also with insight and fire. As with Henry Adams, the Machine (with its pulverizing impersonalism) is viewed as giving rise to an infinite mass of conflicting minds and of conflicting interests that destroy the substance and promise of man (the human *person*) and his destiny. But from the Great Tradition comes the infinite perspective, the belief in "the *person* whose dynamic consciousness and energy will make him the creative focus of group action." "The individual integrated in his Cosmos, I call the person." He dedicates himself to the creating of "a society where, not the individual, but the *potential person* is the norm of value. . . . The person, then, is the individual through whom the Cosmos speaks."⁷ These doctrines are given point and force by a masterly survey of our present world situation, a survey that shows American isolationism to be fantasy-thinking, for the guilt of Fascism is in us,—a survey that dissects and discriminatingly evaluates not only old-fashioned Liberalism

⁵A similar approach to the question of the relations between democracy and religion is to be found in Father V. A. Demant's new book, *The Religious Prospect*, London, Frederick Muller, 1939. 253 pp. 7s. 6d. This is one of the finest theological treatises that has come out of England in recent years. The emphasis given in this book to the transcendent element in religion permits it to serve as a corrective of Mr. Frank's immanentism.

⁶Mr. Frank's criticism of the rationalists is in many respects the same as that made by Professor Robins in this issue of THE JOURNAL.

⁷Mr. Frank's point of view has many affinities with that of the Personalist group in Paris (under the leadership of Emmanuel Mounier), described in Professor Marck's article, "Neo-Humanism in Europe and America," in the Summer issue of THE JOURNAL.

and Communism, but also the American brand of sentimentalism which resists change under cover of a vocalic nostalgia for "the good old days of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln—Calvin Coolidge," and of hypocritical appeals to "The American Way" and to the Constitution. But we cannot dwell upon the heresies. It must suffice to say that this book is virtually made to order for use in discussion groups in our churches, not only because it is a primer of present-day heresy but also because it is a fine primer of liberal religion, the religion for which the derived dignity of the human person is a central tenet.⁸ The book is no narrowly doctrinaire pronouncement: the author discerns the abiding values in Hellenism, Liberalism, and Communism as well as in the historical Christian faith. He even knows how to say a good word for bourgeois resistance to Communism. We only wish that he did not view his own function (and that of the creative writer in general) as a merely indirect one, thus apparently exempting himself from responsibility for "participation in political creation." If he did not so circumscribe his function he might have provided us with a little more specific direction as to the ways in which we may utilize existing religious and political institutions to the end of "integrating the Great Tradition into American life." Thus, too, he might have distinguished himself even more clearly from the pseudo-intellectuals in America whom he so rightly condemns.⁹ Every reader may wish to modify in one way or another Mr. Frank's characterization of the Great Tradition beside whose waters our tree should be planted, but the liberal will nevertheless find here an articulation of the faith that should bring him well on the way to repentance and to conversion, to a conversion that will lead to a creative revolution in our life and overcome the demonic elements of the machine and industrialism, thus drawing us nearer to "a union of persons and of groups of persons working in an economy of plenty, a union of peoples in a confederation of peace." Nothing less than this will bring about "the new social mind" that may unite both the power of the Virgin and the power of the dynamo.

⁸An almost equally valuable book for this purpose is Gregory Vlastos' *Christian Faith and Democracy*. New York: Association Press, 1939. 80 pp. \$.50.

⁹In this connection, the reader's attention is called to Mr. Frank's reply (in *The Saturday Review of Literature*, June 15, 1940) to Max Lerner's confused criticism of the former's book (in the issue of May 25, 1940.) Professor Lerner begins by attacking Frank as an irrationalist and ends by denying that ideas *precede* social reconstruction.

Book Reviews

NATURALISM, SCIENCE, AND PHILOSOPHY

Naturalism is regarded by Professor Pratt in his Powell Lectures¹ as the "open-minded and persistent study of Nature," but it may also be "taken as a systematic description or theory of the world" (and as such it is "frankly speculative"). Nature, then, is identified with the "world" and hence covers the fields of physical nature, life, mind and morals and religion, each of which is discussed in turn, with freshness, and with Professor Pratt's usual winning modesty.

Professor Pratt's concern is with pointing out that Naturalism is not to be identified with any particular theory such as mechanism or materialism but is to be distinguished by its method and aim and, more important, that the distinction between a "crude" and a "critical" Naturalism is basic to the understanding of Naturalism and the advancement of fruitful speculation.

The method of Naturalism is consistently faithful to empiricism—the balanced use of facts and reason. Supernaturalism has contaminated philosophy with an uncritical "will-to-believe." Authoritarianism refuses to face facts and logic. Rationalism, finally, tips the scales in favor of logic to the disastrous neglect of facts, so that an exaggerated and unjustified attention to the "realm of essence" instead of the "realm of existence" leads once more to an uncritical faith; necessary truths supercede facts—there "must be a Northwest Passage" whether there is one or not. By avoiding the weaknesses of its opponents Naturalism, it is contended (perhaps questionably), is able to proceed in such a manner that both its methods and its resulting systems are more resilient and capable of change.

The battle concerning Naturalism has since James Ward's time centered around the effort to make the word Naturalism cover more than mechanism and materialism and include the at least obviously experienced realm of ends or value. Some of the freshness of Professor Pratt's work grows out of his partly shifting the battleground to the realm of method and his practically equating Naturalism with inquiry and tentativeness with respect to the development of method and systems.

The main part of Professor Pratt's work is, however, devoted to the distinction between "crude" (dogmatic and reductive) Naturalism and "critical" Naturalism. To be or not to be a Naturalist he holds depends on whether one is to be permitted by those whom one would make one's associates to exploit (1) ordinary experience as it seems to throw light on concepts used by the scientists and (2) the implications of the limits in any particular reductive theory of mechanistic materialism.

¹NATURALISM. By James Bissett Pratt. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939. 180 pp. \$2.00.

The concept of causation when seen in the light of ordinary experience holds "something more" than the scientific concept of causation. Indeed causation, as understood by Professor Pratt, namely, the production of "intended results," is made a necessary postulate of Naturalism, and this suggests that "reality is full of dynamic lines of continuous influence," that "everything is what it is in part by virtue of its relation to everything else" (p. 55), and that Nature is an "almost organic whole" (p. 57), which is dominated, at least in part, by definite tendencies of "immanent purpose" (p. 93). In the field of morals and religion this leads Professor Pratt to an organic Naturalism wedded to religion that restores the great "I am that I am" to its (or His) high place—the "grand climax," to use Lippmann's phrase, in the speculative drama.

All this raises not only the problem of the relation of philosophy to science but also the problem of method in philosophy itself as seen from the point of view of Professor Pratt's criticism of the opponents of Naturalism. It is one thing for a scientist to admit that there is "something more" than he has yet been able to get at by his methods. That "something more" picked up by philosophers of Professor Pratt's persuasion is quite another thing (and seems with little variation in the pattern to lead almost monotonously to the "grand climax" of traditional religion). Hence the questions arise: Is empirical method all of a piece? Is it necessary to make new and clear distinctions within the empirical method? How reconsider the methods of the sciences and the methods of philosophy? For Professor Pratt the methods of philosophy apparently are not assumed to be once removed from the facts. He appeals to facts of naive experience to controvert the mechanistic hypothesis and on the basis of these facts constructs an organic universe—for they "imply" it. In one sense philosophy is a competitor of science, at least in so far as its method involves observation of facts and the use of the hypothetical-deductive method. But in what manner is philosophy abstract in contrast to science?

One significant difference (assuming Truth for both science and philosophy) is the recklessness with which philosophy often goes from a few facts to ultimate reality, assisted in Professor Pratt's case by the frank and unrestrained use of the method of analogy. Professor Pratt claims only probability for his views and that indeed is all that can be claimed for views arrived at by analogy. More important is whether the use of analogy in this fashion has not long since become unproductive of new insights. It might be worthwhile to suggest that Naturalism be characterized not only by open-mindedness and persistent search of truth, but also by restraint and that its boldness of speculation be not misdirected.

Since, however, it is the privilege of a philosopher to use analogy and myth as he pleases, and to make what postulates he likes, Professor Pratt is limited only by clarifying what he means by "almost organic" and accounting for mechanism, which he seems to admit, for nowhere does he faintly suggest that his "organic" view rests either on Pan-psychism and its vari-

ants (which he rejected as "exceedingly improbable" in his *Personal Realism*), or on Absolute Idealism; nor do we get any other leading clues.

The result of Professor Pratt's necessary postulate seems to be a particular theory—precisely what he set out to disprove. To be or not to be a Naturalist would depend upon the acceptance of the particular, namely, teleological view of causation. Such a *tour de force* one may, I believe, safely predict will reveal (1) that Naturalism is not characterized at all obviously by a change or development from "crude" (mechanistic and/or materialistic) to "critical" (teleological) Naturalism, and (2) that Naturalism after all is not an adequate term to cover both views of causation, each of which will undoubtedly survive.

For philosophy itself, the general effort to clarify and extend the term Naturalism seems to have ended in an incoherent mass of naturalisms and has borne the term from definiteness, beyond a respectable indefiniteness almost to a state of disrepute. It has brought forth neither an *essentially new* way of accounting for the facts of experience nor greatly fructified old ways. The significant thinking of our era has been almost entirely apart from this effort. It is best to declare a long vacation.

The University of Kansas City

HAROLD BUSCHMAN.

RELIGION, DEMOCRACY, AND ECONOMICS

American Faith is a most readable popular text telling the story of our collective religious experience from the settlement at Jamestown until the Civil War.¹ Mr. Bates, whose present volume was published only shortly before his death, has provided the literate American churchman with a long overdue handbook on the origins of our present religious societies, a handbook which indicates its author's scholarship and prophetic convictions (for the volume is not a mere *omnium gatherum*). The thesis can be stated briefly: Our American faith today in liberalism, equality, education and democracy, which are manifest to the casual observer mainly in political and economic terms, was founded on religious ideas of great importance. Almost five hundred pages of evidence are presented to the jury of readers, evidence which saves the author from writing just a theological tract and compels him to write a colorful, imaginative narrative describing historical realities.

Religion is found in history, according to the author. As a result, a great deal of attention is devoted to the story of the struggles of our forefathers to establish a social order here on these shores, a task which never ceased to be a religious enterprise. While Mr. Bates finds religion concerned with root ideas, with inner attitudes and habits of mind, he at no time divorces religion from the tensions of man's social life. We are reminded of the raw,

¹AMERICAN FAITH. By Ernest Sutherland Bates. New York: W. W. Norton, 1940. 479 pp. \$3.75.

hard realities of life in Bradford's Plymouth colony, of the explosive and sincere democracy of the "sons of Liberty" in Boston, of Justice Taney's racist theories in the Dred Scott decision, of Cartwright's revivals and Joseph Smith's charlatanism. In short *American Faith* is a religious history of America that does not object to taking theology seriously while recognizing the need for a more Marxist analysis of our social history than the average theologian gives us. (Bates was not an orthodox Marxist.)

This is a popular text, not a scholar's sourcebook. (It has an index but few footnotes and no bibliography.) Still it ought to be required reading for American seminary students, for it contains the least they should know about religion in their own country. One too often concludes after hearing first-year sermons that religion completely congealed into a closed revelation after the death of Martin Luther. *American Faith* presents one man's endeavor to organize the basic facts about the major religious experiments on these shores in an interesting and intelligent manner. His judgments on Unitarians (to this reviewer) were excellent, including his salty summary of our nineteenth (I hope not twentieth) century sins. He traces American Unitarianism to Samuel Johnson of Yale. Jonathan Mayhew and William Ellery Channing, giving brief but vigorous comments on the deism of Franklin, Paine and Jefferson. Especially valuable for present-day religious living are three features in Mr. Bates's study: (1) His recognition of Emerson's soundness of diagnosis of American social evils in economic terms and Emerson's utter incompetence to suggest solutions; (2) His interest in central religious ideas of man, salvation and revelation as they express themselves in popular religious movements of the people; and (3) His frank demonstration that prophetic religion meets stiff resistance when it effectively assists men to enrich their common life in political and economic terms. (Cf. The revolt of the feudal serfs and traders, Horace Mann's efforts to make education truly democratic, the deletions made on Jefferson's first draft of the Declaration of Independence.)

The Unitarian Youth Commission,
Boston, Mass.

STEPHEN H. FRITCHMAN.

ERRATUM

In the first line of Dr. Karl Beth's review of Professor S. H. Mellone's *The Bearings of Psychology on Religion* (Summer issue of THE JOURNAL OF LIBERAL RELIGION, page 55), the word "ambitions" should have read "unambitious."